Why are so few organisations managing to implement the ideas of HCI

What are the problems associated with user-centred design?

Structured Systems Analysis and Design Methodology

Organisation A

- **Organisation A** is a relatively small medical organisation where time and money are very important issues within systems development. It gained an overall score for user centredness of 20 per cent. It finds SSDM, together with CASE tool to be both effective and cheap. The organisation feels that users can be trained to be effective participants in the process, although problems with user involvement relate to the user's unrealistically high expectations of the IT solutions. Designer do not fully understand business needs, while users take a far too simplistic view of IT opportunities. Prototyping is not possible because of a lack of resources and available time.

Organisation B

- **Organisation B** is well known chain of supermarket retail outlets. It gained an overall score for user-centred of 25 per cent. The management information systems department is very centrelised and does not make a significant attempt to engage end users or individual stores in the design of system. A traditional approach is used with little emphasis on prototyping. In general system are imposed on stores from centre.

Organisation C

- **Organisation C** is a medium-sized organisation specializing in truck rental, distribution and logistics. It gainded an overall score for user centredness of 29 per cent. The organisation is moving away from traditional system analysis and design toward a new structured method. A major contribution to this decision has come from the fact that the organisation is a subdiary of a larger American company. The organisation feels that having users actively involved in design can have both advantages and disadvantage, but on the whole it is felt better to attempt to involve users. Problems relate to apathy on behalf of the users and their lack of ability to relate to IT issues. Prototyping tends to be limited to paper-based techniques. Organisational issues are becoming increasingly part of its overall development process

Organisation D

- **Organisation D** provides IT services centrally to a range of subsidiary company. It gained an overall score for user-centredness of 36 per cent. System engineering is used and this is seen to be very helpful in communication with users, for example through the use of data flow diagrams. The organisation is very keen on secondment of users to the design process, but feels that finding the right person is often difficult. Problems with communicating with end users rest with line management within the user department. Prototyping is difficult as the end user department often unrealistic time expectations

Organisation E

- **Organisation E** is well known medium-sized provider of the energy facilities. It gained an overall score for user-centredness of 37%. The organisation is fairly traditional in its approach to analysis and design but has found that SSADM helps to formalize design and aid communication. Prototyping is seen to be very useful for user communication. There has no real attempt at wider organizational issues within design, mainly because of the lack of senior management support.

Organisation F

- **Organisation F** is a nationally known regional electricity supplier. It gained an overall score for user-centredness of 45%. They have standarised on a structured methodology, which has been found to be useful in communication with users, particullarly through the use of formal diagrams. Overall though, some IT staff are "luke warm" to the whole process of the user involvement. Partnership in design is enacted at managerial level but there is not much engagement with end-users; engagement there is, is limited by the difficulty in finding the right people and overcoming their knowledge gap. User group are being set up so that organization implications can be identified, but currently the wider organisational view is not gaining appropriate recognition.